

The Highland Village Plan

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CREDITS

The development of the Highland Village Plan has been the responsibility of the Highland Village Planning Committee. The committee is composed of representatives from the Highland Business Association, commercial property owners within Highland Village, and rep-

resentatives from the Southwest Area District Council. It is chaired by a member of the St. Paul Planning Commission and staffed by the St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development. Work began on the plan in March of 1984.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

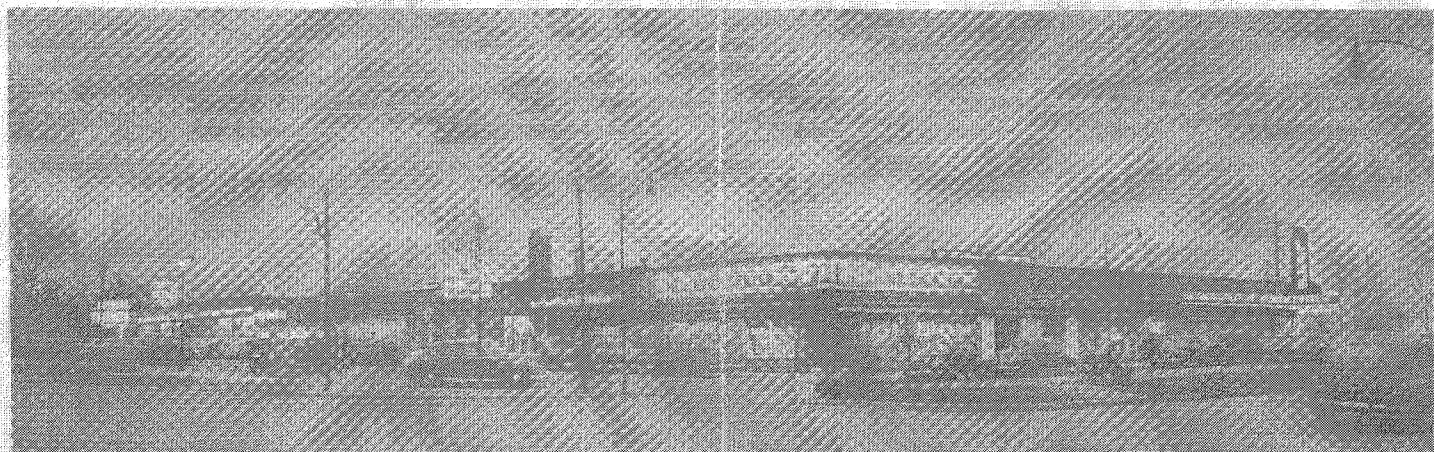
Sign types, Figure 3, adopted from "University Commercial Revitalization Program Implementation Guide," City of St. Paul.

I. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Highland Village Plan is threefold:

1. To develop a consensus among commercial property owners, commercial tenants and adjacent residents on the future direction of the commercial area.
2. To provide an overall framework for guiding all future improvements to the commercial area.
3. To identify specific private and public programs and projects, that will be undertaken within the commercial area in the next two years.



The Highland Village "skyline" as it appeared in the early '40s, before the first fire.

HISTORY

In January 1923, Henry Ford announced plans to build a \$10 million manufacturing and assembly plant on a 167-acre tract of land in Highland Park. The Ford Plant, completed in 1924, was perhaps the most important factor leading to the development of the Highland Village commercial area and adjacent residential areas.

In the years following the construction of the Ford Plant, the open fields and farm lands surrounding the plant site were subdivided, sewer and water lines laid, and streets paved. Homes were built and the area took on its single-family residential character.

The intersection of Cleveland Avenue and Ford Parkway received its development stimulus in 1938 with the announcement that the \$1 million Highland Manor Apartment City would be built on the southwest corner of the intersection. The red brick complex, which opened in October 1939, was dubbed the "apartment city of tomorrow" by its developers. The complex consisted of 16 apartment

buildings and one commercial building. The commercial building was located on what is now Powers' east parking lot.

While the Highland Manor apartment complex was under construction, a new suburban-type shopping center was also being built across Cleveland Avenue on the southeast corner of the intersection. This development, the Highland Shopping Center, had the largest retail food store in the Twin Cities and was hailed at the time as the most modern around, with every convenience for the shopper.

That same year, the Highland Theater, noted for its ultra-modern art deco architecture, was opened. By the end of 1939 the Cleveland Avenue and Ford Parkway intersection had become a major commercial center in St. Paul.

The subsequent decade saw two major fires in the Highland Shopping Center. The first, in 1941, destroyed an entire section of the building. It was quickly rebuilt. The next fire, in 1951, caused 10 times the amount of damage and destroyed almost the entire center. Within 90 days of the fire, work on rebuilding the shopping center was under way.

During the following years, the area continued to grow with new buildings and expansions occurring regularly. The building on the northwest corner of Cleveland and Ford Parkway was built in 1950, and the commercial building that was part of the Highland Manor apartment complex was torn down in 1960 to make room for the new Powers' department store. The Highland Bank moved into its new addition to the Highland Shopping Center in 1968.

The last major development occurred in 1976 when the Highland Village Center, which included the Applebaum's Food Market (now Lund's), went up just west of Powers, along with a parking lot for over 250 cars.

Currently, the Highland Village commercial area is the home for 114 businesses and is recognized as the neighborhood commercial center for southwestern St. Paul.

The aftermath of the fire of '51.

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

STRENGTHS

1. A strong neighborhood market characterized by above-average income.
2. A retail shopping image characterized by several exclusive shops and a major department store.
3. An attractive mix of entertainment activities, i.e. restaurants and movie theater.
4. An adequate supply of off-street parking.
5. The presence of an active business association.

WEAKNESSES

1. A general decline in the physical appearance of commercial buildings, parking lots and public streetscape.
2. An unattractive environment for pedestrians.
3. Diversity of interest among property owners and commercial tenants.
4. A history of conflict between businesses and residents along Pinehurst Avenue.
5. A decrease in the number of businesses owned by Village merchants.
6. Inefficient use of off-street parking.

GOALS

1. To enhance the growth and profitability of the Highland Village business community.
2. To create a strong, distinctive image for Highland Village.
3. To ensure that commercial activities and development will be sensitive and compatible with adjacent residential property.



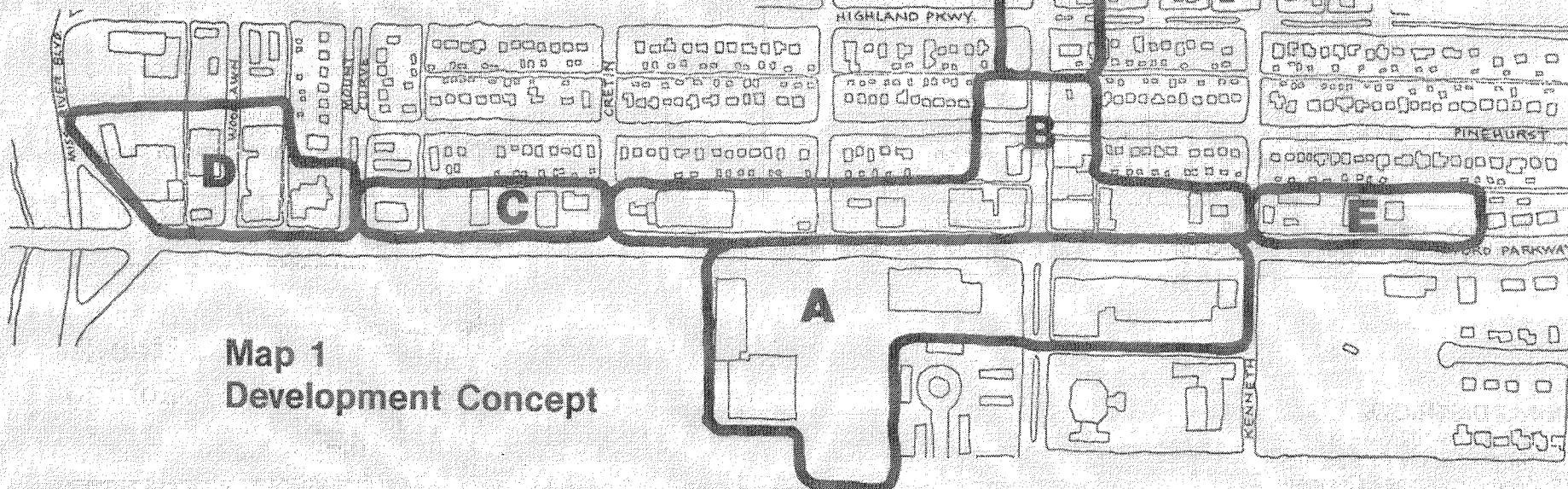
Left, Powers department store, soon to be Donaldsons, provides a strong retail anchor at the corner of Ford Parkway and Cleveland Avenue in Highland Village.

Left, examples of the general decline in the Village streetscape and the uninviting shopping environment created by unusually wide streets and lack of pedestrian amenities.

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SUB-AREA

- A High Density, Shoppers and Convenience Goods
- B Low Density, Shoppers and Convenience Goods
- C Low Density, Convenience Goods, Services
- D High Density, Convenience Goods, Services
- E Low Density, Convenience Goods, Services



**Map 1
Development Concept**

II. LAND USE

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The development concept for Highland Village consists of two parts:

1. Create a retail shopping district at the center of the Village; and
2. Create low- and high-density development areas.

The intersection of Ford Parkway and Cleveland will be the center of the retail shopping district. (See subareas A and B, Map 1.) Within the district, the emphasis will be on businesses that sell shoppers goods (clothing, shoe, jewelry, and book stores), and convenience goods (restaurants, and food and drug stores.)

Outside of the retail shopping district, the emphasis will be on businesses that sell convenience goods and provide services (banks; medical, real estate and law offices; and beauty shops).

New commercial development should fit in with the existing density and use pattern of the neighborhood. Consequently, near low-density, single-family

residential areas, new commercial development will be low-density. (See subareas B, C and E, Map 1, and Table 1.) Near high-density apartment areas and non-residential areas, high-density commercial development will be encouraged. (See subareas A and D, Map 1, and Table 1.)

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SUB-AREA	RECOMMENDED BUSINESSES	DENSITY			SETBACKS (Feet)			PARKING		
		TYPE	FLOOR AREA RATIO	MAXIMUM HEIGHT FEET	STORIES	FRONT	SIDE	REAR	TYPE	LOCATION
A	Shoppers Goods Stores Convenience Goods Stores*	High	2***	30***	3***	15	0	10	Ramp	No parking on ground floor next to Ford Parkway or Cleveland.
B	Shoppers Goods Stores Convenience Goods Stores*	Low	2	30	3	0	0	10	Surface lot or ramp	Lot: side or rear of building. Ramp: no parking on ground floor next to Ford Parkway or Cleveland.
C	Convenience Goods Stores* Services	Low	2	30	3	15	10	10	Surface lot	Side or rear of building
D	Convenience Goods Stores*	High	2***	30***	3***	15	0	10	Surface lot or ramp	Lot: side or rear of building. Ramp: no parking on ground floor next to Ford Parkway.
E	Convenience Goods Stores** Services	Low	2	30	3	15	10	10	Surface lot	Side, rear or front of building.

* Fast food restaurants excluded.

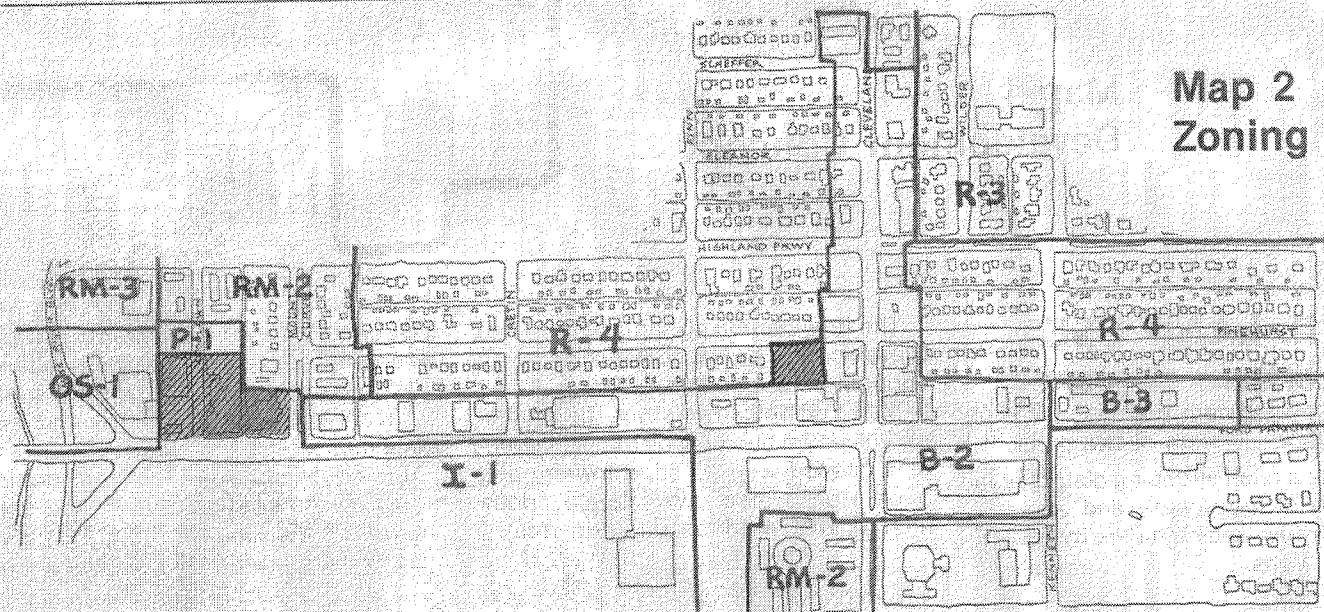
** Fast food restaurants permitted.

*** Zoning variances will be granted for compatible high-density development.

NOTE: Floor area ratio is the total floor area within a building divided by the area of the lot on which it stands.

ZONING DISTRICTS

- R-3 Single-Family Residential
- R-4 Single-Family Residential
- RM-2 Medium Density Residential
- RM-3 High-Density Residential
- OS-1 Office Service
- B-2 Community Business
- B-3 General Business
- I-1 Industry
- P-1 Parking
- Zoning Change



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ZONING

The proposed zoning for the Highland Village area is the same as the existing zoning with two exceptions—the property north of Snyder's Drugstore on Pinehurst Avenue and the property north of Ford Parkway and west of Mount Curve. (See Map 2.)

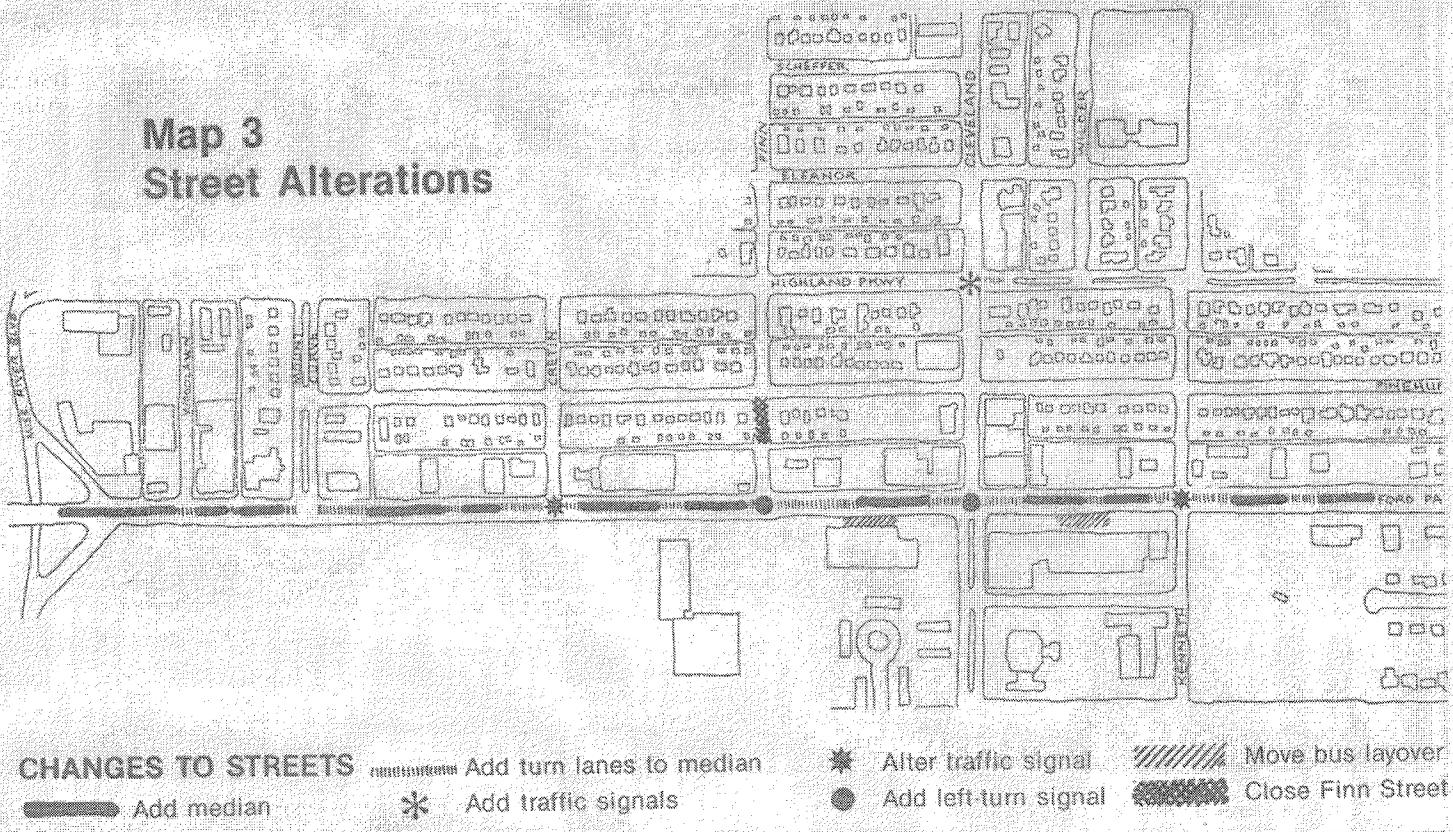
The Pinehurst property is now residentially zoned and consists of three vacant lots owned by Snyder's and one vacant lot and a single-family house owned by Twin City Federal. It is recommended that the property owners and abutting residents work out a compromise for rezoning and developing the site. Three possible development options are:

1. Relocate the single-family house to the westernmost vacant lot, and develop the remainder of the property as commercial surface parking.
2. Relocate the single-family house to the westernmost vacant lot, develop ownership townhouses on the middle three vacant lots, and develop the lot from which the single-family house was moved to commercial surface parking.
3. Develop ownership townhouses on all the vacant lots, move or demolish the house, and develop that lot for commercial surface parking.

If townhouses are built, they should be targeted toward "empty nester" households, and the design of the buildings should be based on a competition.

The Ford Parkway property is industrially zoned, but only partly used for industry, and is next to residences. If the property ceases to be used for industry, it should be rezoned for business.

Map 3
Street Alterations



CHANGES TO STREETS

- Add median
- Add turn lanes to median
- Add traffic signals
- Alter traffic signal
- Add left-turn signal
- Move bus layover
- Close Finn Street

III. TRANSPORTATION

STREETS

The objectives for the street design in Highland Village are:

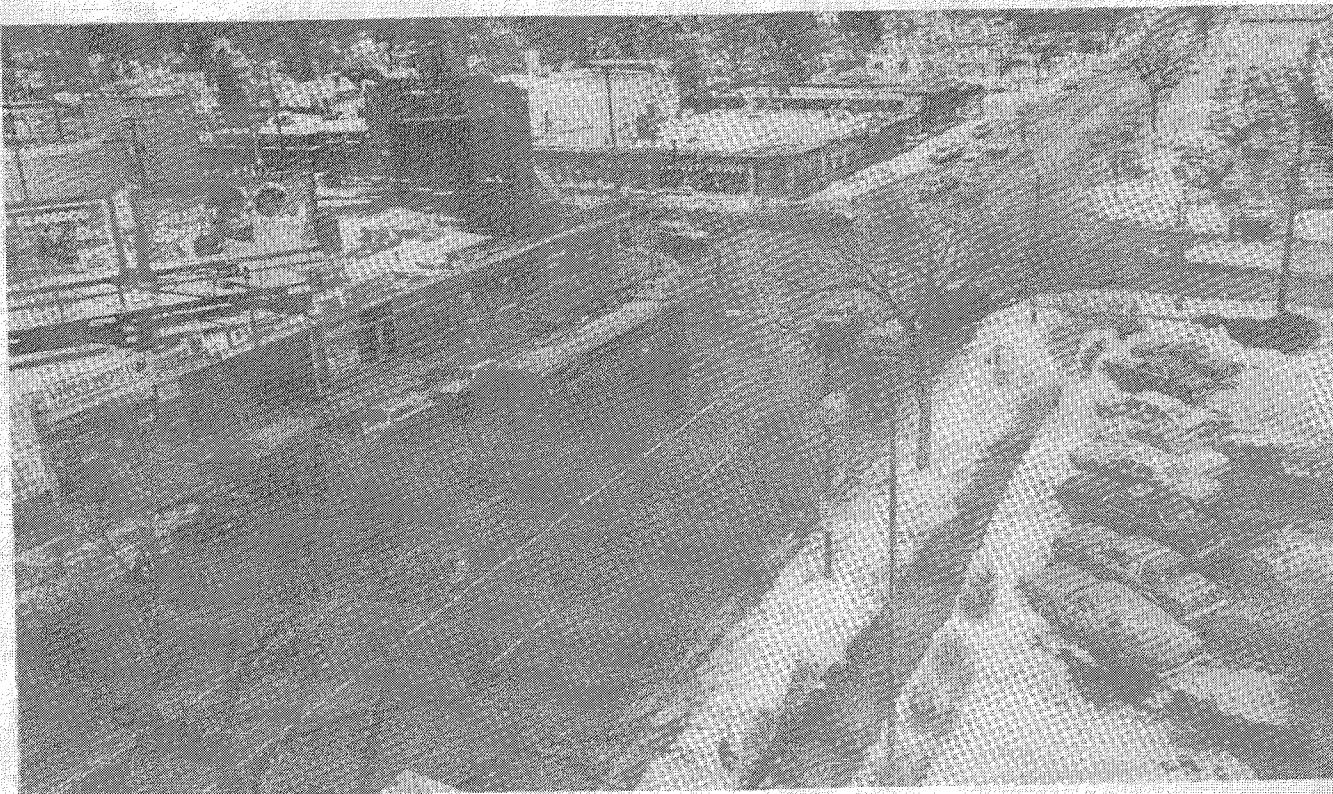
- Increase safety for drivers, pedestrians and nearby residents.
- Provide drivers easy, direct access to and from Village businesses.
- Provide efficient movement for drivers going through the Village.

On Ford Parkway, safety will be increased by adding medians, which will separate opposing streams of traffic. Ford Parkway will be narrowed at pedestrian crossings so that pedestrians will have less street to cross. Finn Street will be closed between Pinehurst and the alley south of Pinehurst. This will prevent cars travelling to and from the Village from going through the residential area.

Access to Village businesses will be enhanced by providing left turn lanes in the new median on Ford Parkway at

street intersections and at parking lot driveways. Two bus layover areas on Ford Parkway, highly desirable for on-street parking, will be moved to more remote locations. Access to businesses and movement of drivers through the Village will be helped by altering timing of existing signals, adding left turn signals, and installing new signals as needed.

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Above, a view of the Village from atop Powers department store. Near right, hedges hide cars in the Powers parking lot. Far right, a brick wall serves a similar purpose behind the Twin City Federal property.

PARKING

The parking strategy is to make better use of the existing parking supply, to require sufficient off-street parking for new development, and to make parking lots more attractive to customers.

1. Off-street parking objectives:
 - Increase parking supply by redesigning parking lots.
 - Promote shared use of parking lots by businesses.
 - Make parking lots more attractive by adding landscaping, adding or replacing light standards, and using uniform information signs.
 - Reserve most desirable parking spaces near businesses for customers, and restrict employee parking to least desirable spaces farthest from businesses.
 - Reduce employee use of parking by promoting alternative means of travel to work, such as car pools or buses.
2. On-street parking objectives:
 - Maintain existing parking supply.
 - Limit spaces to short-term use.
 - Increase the turnover of spaces.

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IV. URBAN DESIGN

PUBLIC STREETSCAPE

The streetscape includes the roadway, sidewalks, trees, light standards and other "furniture" in the city's right-of-way. The existing Village streetscape is unexciting, unorganized and time-worn.

The purpose of improving the Village's streetscape is to:

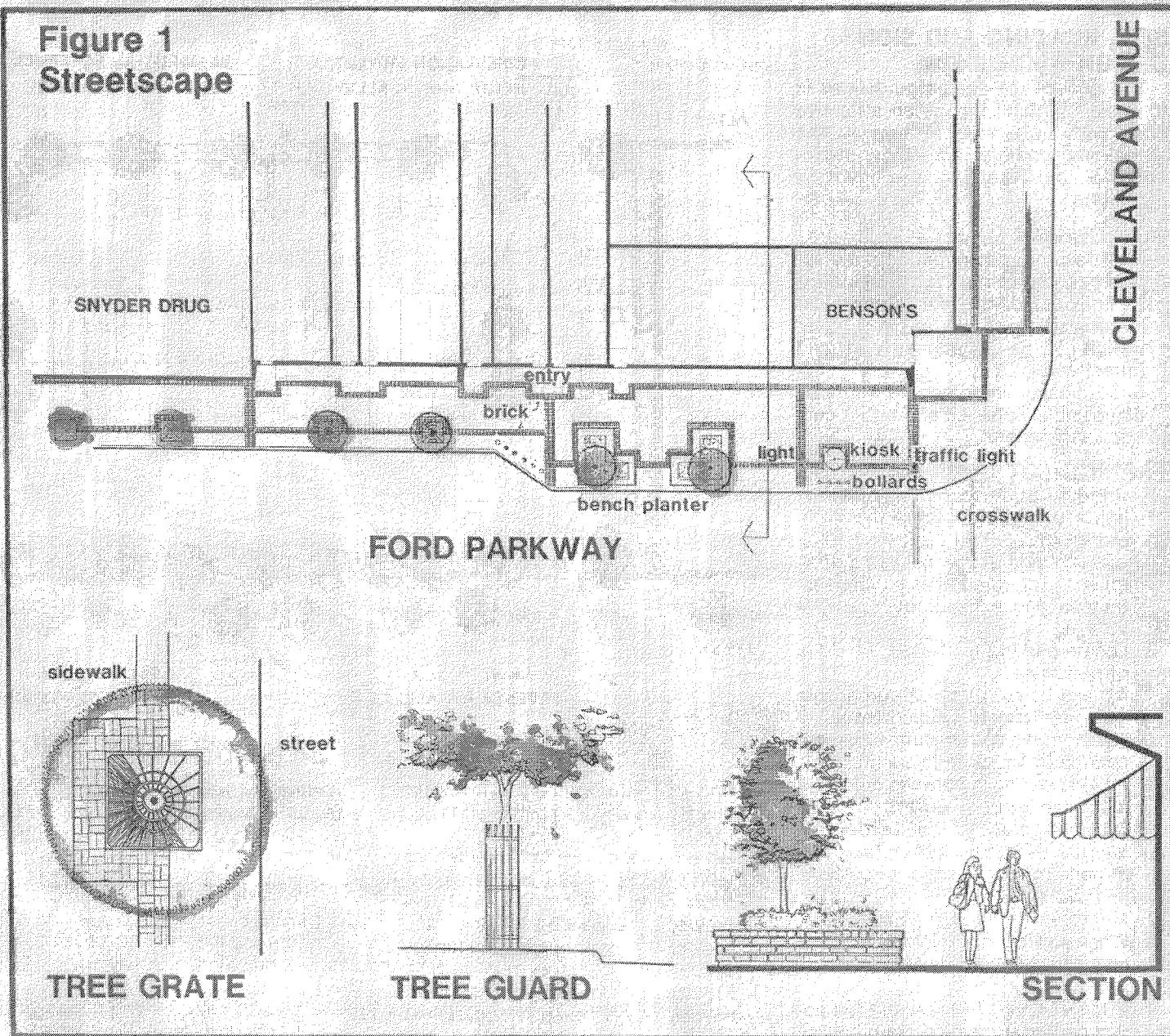
- Encourage people to come to the Village to shop.
- Induce businesses to locate in the Village.
- Encourage people to walk from shop to shop through the Village.
- Create a unique image of the Village so that people have a favorable impression of it.

The proposed improvements consist of:

- Transforming Ford Parkway, now a parkway in name only, into a true parkway by adding landscaped medians and resurfacing the roadway; and
- Renovating the sidewalk areas of Ford Parkway and Cleveland Avenue by adding new sidewalks with brick accents, decorative pedestrian lights, planters, trash receptacles, trees (including tree guards and grates), and an information kiosk.

Northern States Power's wooden poles and overhead power lines along Cleveland, Finn and Ford Parkway (west of the Baker Square Restaurant) are ugly. The poles should be removed and the power lines put underground, out of sight.

Figure 1
Streetscape



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SITE, BUILDING AND SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The goal of the design guidelines is to make Highland Village an attractive place with a character of its own. The guidelines promote harmony and continuity among the streetscape, buildings and signs.

SITE DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Provide continuity throughout the Village by using common elements, such as light standards, fences and plant materials.
- Define spaces and edges clearly and attractively.
- Subordinate cars to people. As much as possible, separate and buffer cars from pedestrians.

PARKING LOT GUIDELINES

1. Bring the streetscape — pedestrian lights, trees, sidewalks — into parking lots.
2. Use common, simply designed signs for such information as parking, entrances and exits, throughout the Village.
3. Locate parking to the rear or sides of buildings.
4. Access parking lots on corner lots from side streets, with curb cuts 30 feet from the corner. Buffer adjacent residential areas from traffic.
5. Provide setbacks between buildings and parking lot driveways.
6. Do not use alleys that border residential uses to enter or back out of parking spaces or for circulation driveways.
7. Minimize the number of curb cuts.
8. When parking lots adjoin, share curb cuts and circulation driveways where possible.
9. In large parking lots, use the circulation pattern to create parking "areas."

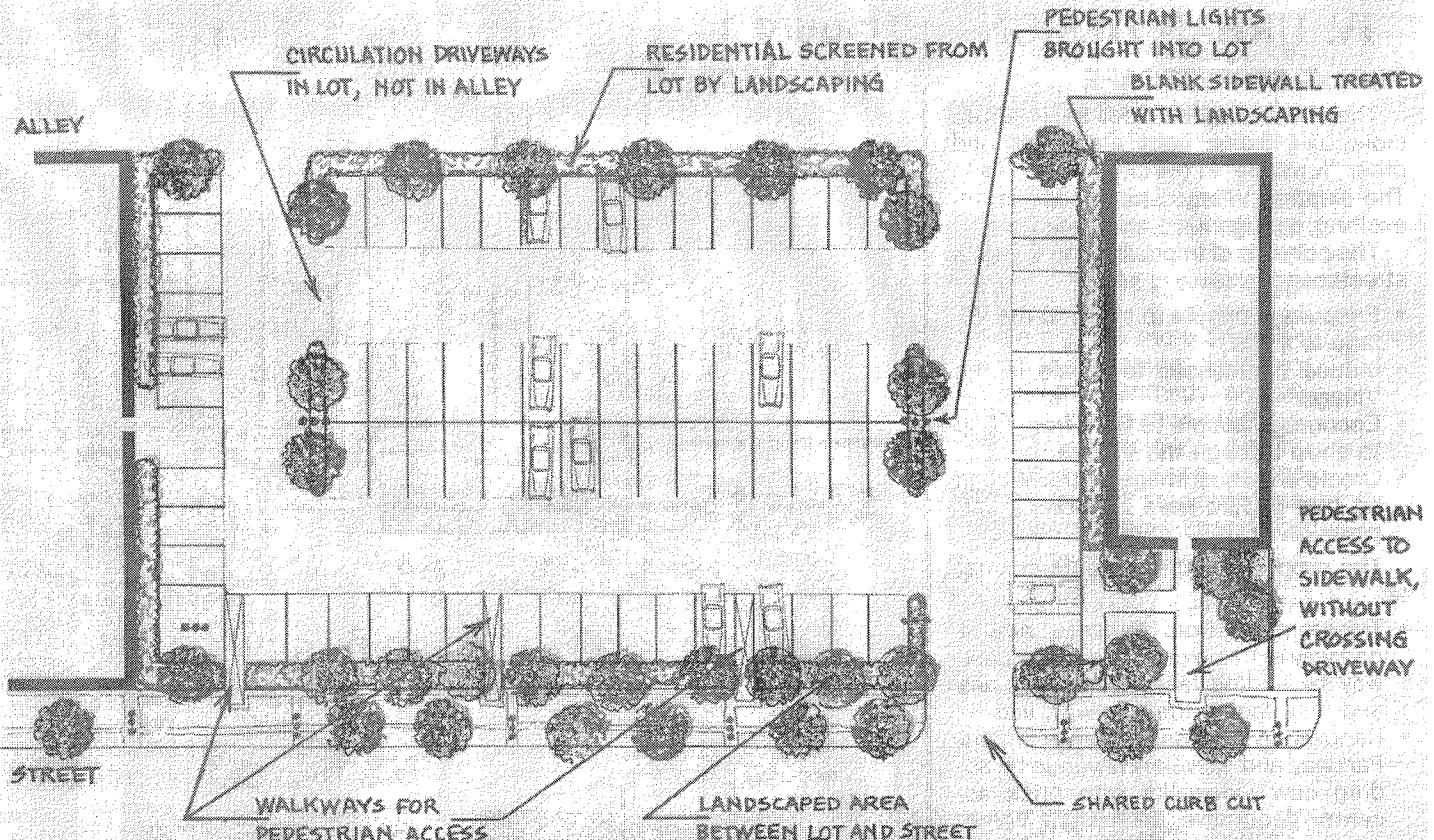


Figure 2

Site and Building Guidelines

10. Provide landscaped areas, low walls and fences between parking lots and streets.
11. Screen parking lots from residences with landscaping or fences.
12. Plant trees in the landscaped area between the parking lot and sidewalk to maintain the building facade line.
13. Provide one square foot of landscaped area for each 10 square feet of paved area. Provide landscaped islands in lots with more than 50 cars.
14. Locate convenience drive-throughs to the side or rear of buildings.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS GUIDELINES

1. Avoid making pedestrians cross driveways when entering or leaving a building.
2. Provide walkways for pedestrian access to parking lots.

SERVICE FUNCTION GUIDELINES

1. Separate goods delivery and garbage removal areas from customer parking.
2. Screen garbage storage.
3. Access goods delivery from the alley.

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EXTERIOR LIGHTING GUIDELINES

1. Use the same pedestrian lights in parking lots that are used along the street.
2. If supplementary lighting is needed in large lots, emphasize the area lighted rather than the light fixture itself.

BUILDING DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Make buildings attractive and inviting to customers.
- Promote visual harmony.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Design new buildings to be compatible with surrounding buildings.
2. Remodel buildings to be compatible with original building.
3. Do not restrict architectural style to any one style.
4. Make buildings accessible to handicapped people.

BUILDING ORIENTATION GUIDELINES

1. Face buildings to the street, and provide customer access to the sidewalk.

2. Treat customer entryways with color, lighting and pedestrian scale signs.
3. Ensure pedestrians can see in and out of windows. Display products in windows; limit window signs.

SCREENING GUIDELINES

1. Treat blank sidewalls by continuing the roof line of the front of the building along the side, installing windows and doors, or planting vines or other landscaping.
2. Screen utilities on tops of buildings from pedestrians on sidewalks.

BUILDING MATERIAL GUIDELINES

1. Limit the number of building materials used on buildings to two (excluding glass in windows). Use durable materials; avoid the "temporary" shiny look.

2. Retain the materials, details and design of the original building when remodeling architecturally or historically significant buildings.
3. Use the same materials, details, building lines and design when adding to buildings.

4. Use the same primary materials and design on all exposed building walls, reflecting the character and identity of the building.
5. Use roll-up canvas awnings as a unifying element. Design awnings to fit and complement the architecture of the building.

BUILDING COLOR GUIDELINES

1. Paint window and door trim a deep, dark brown.
2. Paint buildings in warm colors, ranging from yellow-green to red-purple. Use muted colors; avoid garish colors.
3. Limit building colors to two real colors. (White, grey and black don't count as colors.)
4. Reserve strong, bright colors for significant details, such as entryways and doors.



Above right, the art deco Highland Theater. Near right, the old Edyth Bush Theater, now the corporate home of Dungarvin, Inc. Far right, the side facade and entryway of Juster's Highland Village store.



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SIGN OBJECTIVES

- Provide clear identification of businesses.
- Create a consistent sign system.
- Make signs fit in with the architecture of the building.

VILLAGE-WIDE GUIDELINES

1. Place street numbers in a uniform location, preferably over doorways.
2. Design a common banner for the Village with simple graphics to use on special occasions.
3. Use business signs to inform customers of the types and locations of businesses, not to advertise products.

Sign Types

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Advertising | 7. Pole |
| 2. Rooftop | 8. Wall Graphic |
| 3. Projecting | 9. Awning Graphic |
| 4. Wall | 10. Trailer |
| 5. Group | 11. Banner |
| 6. Window | 12. Ground |

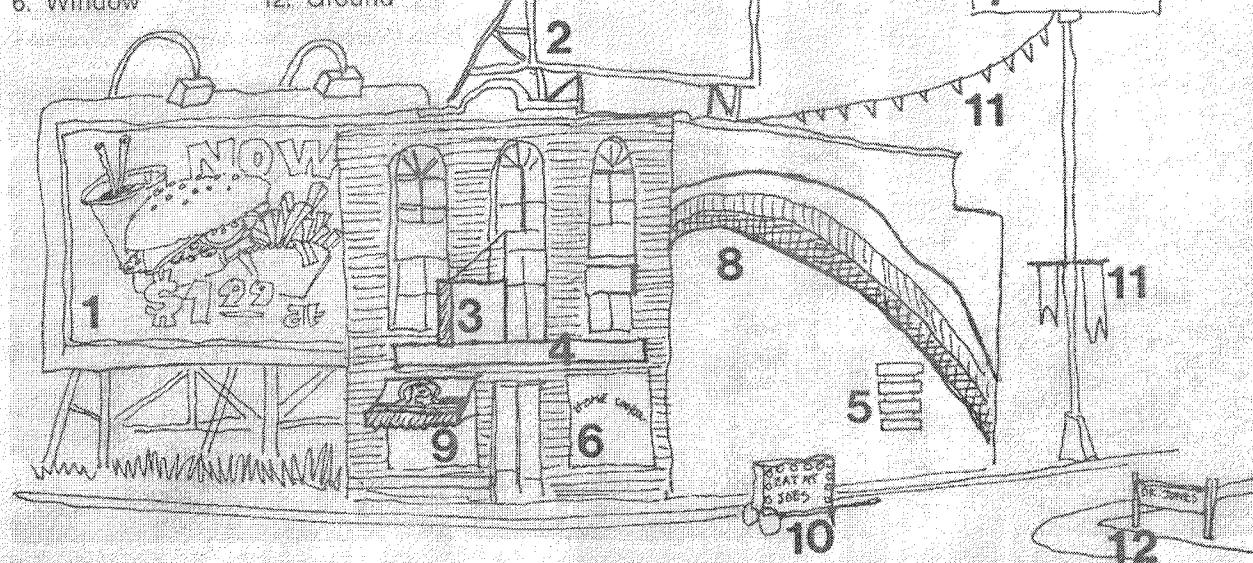


Figure 3 Sign Types

SIGN PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Design special areas for signs on new buildings.
2. Never cover windows or architectural details with signs.
3. In general, orient only one sign per business to each street.
4. Use only one sign type for each building facade.

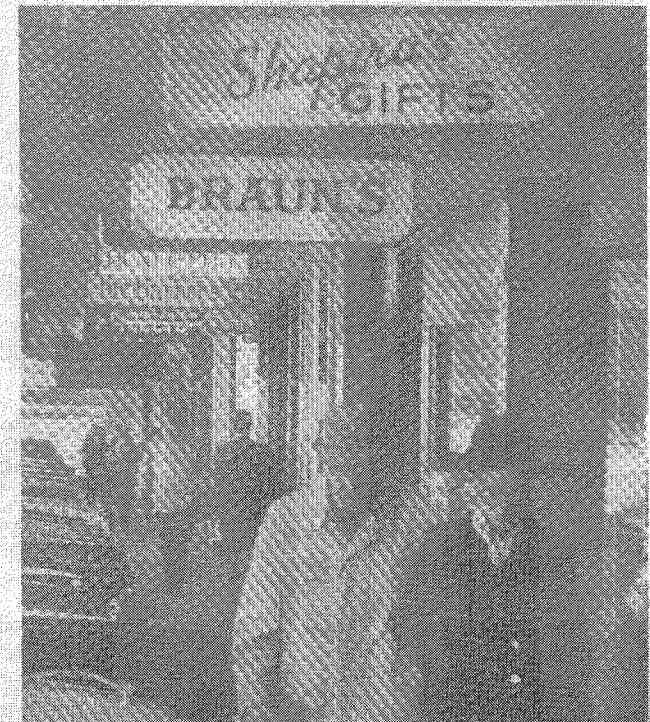
5. Use painted permanent window signs that occupy no more than 10 percent of the window area. Avoid the plastic boxes with slide-on letter type. Use temporary window signs only for specific short-term periods. Temporary window signs should occupy no more than 20 percent of the window area.

6. Use pole signs only with buildings that are occupied by a single business and that have a setback from the street right-of-way greater than 35 feet. Permit only stationary pole signs.

7. Wall graphics are discouraged. Signs painted on a building are prohibited.
8. Trailer signs are prohibited.
9. Used car type banners are prohibited.
10. Use ground signs only when a building is set back from the street right-of-way more than 35 feet. Place ground signs parallel to the street.
11. Use only wall signs, window signs, or ground signs for institutional, professional and industrial buildings.

ADVERTISING SIGNS

1. New advertising signs are prohibited.
2. Existing advertising signs may remain as non-conforming signs, subject to the regulations of the Zoning Code.



The Highland Village Plan Z

Figure 4
Sign Clutter

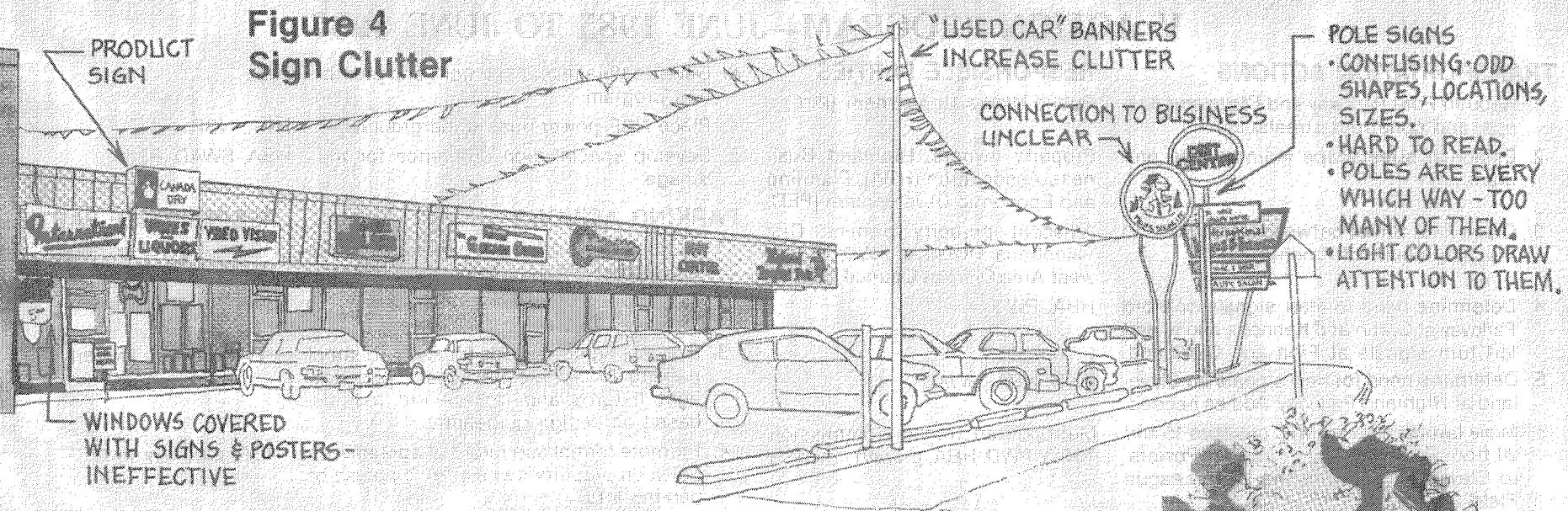
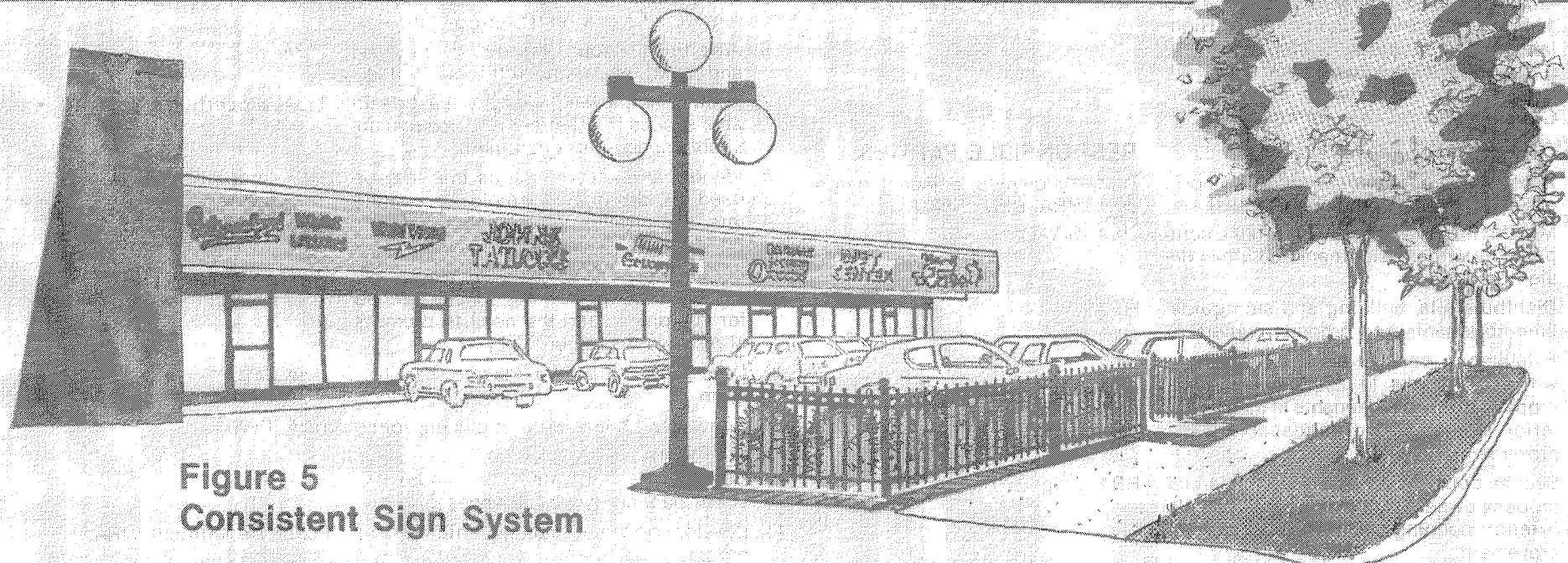


Figure 5
Consistent Sign System



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V. ACTION PROGRAM—JUNE 1985 TO JUNE 1987

TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS

1. Rebuild Ford Parkway and Cleveland Avenue, and construct streetscape.
2. Establish streetscape maintenance program.
3. Close Finn Street between Pinehurst and the alley south of Pinehurst.
4. Determine need to alter signals on Ford Parkway at Cretin and Kenneth, and to add left turn signals at Finn and Cleveland.
5. Determine need for new signals on Cleveland at Highland Parkway. Add as needed.
6. Move layover area for MTC buslines 15 and 20 from Ford Parkway in front of Powers' to Cleveland opposite the Little League Field.
7. Move layover area for MTC buslines 9 and 10 from Ford Parkway in front of the Highland Village Shopping Center. Determine if Kenneth between Ford Parkway and Hillcrest or Hillcrest between Kenneth and Cleveland is best area for layover.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

1. Determine land use for the property north of Snyders Drug Store on Pinehurst.
2. Monitor new development to ensure compatibility with development and urban design guidelines.
3. Distribute site, building and sign guidelines to tenants and property owners.
4. Establish a special financing program with local banks to assist commercial property owners and tenants in making exterior building and landscaping improvements.
5. Secure commitments from commercial property owners and tenants to undertake exterior building and landscaping improvements.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Public Works Department (PWD)

Property owners, Highland Business Association (HBA), Planning and Economic Development (PED)

Adjacent property owners, City Valuations Division, PWD, Southwest Area District Council (SWAD)

HBA, PWD

PWD, HBA, SWAD

Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC), PWD, HBA, property owners

MTC, PWD, HBA, property owners

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Property owners, adjacent neighbors, HBA, PED, SWAD

HBA, SWAD

HBA

HBA

HBA, property owners

6. Develop Village management and promotion program.

7. Place NSP power lines underground.

8. Develop special sign ordinance for the Village.

PARKING ACTIONS

1. Evaluate each off-street parking lot; determine most efficient layout and stripe.

2. Develop and implement landscaping plan for each off-street parking lot.

3. Evaluate lighting needs for each off-street parking lot; where necessary, add new light fixtures and replace old fixtures, based on design guidelines.

4. Promote formal and informal agreements between property owners to share use of parking lots.

5. Allow customers to park in all parking lots; remove all signs restricting parking.

6. Advertise the abundance of free off-street and on-street parking within the Village.

7. Restrict employee parking to least desirable spaces in off-street lots; reserve desirable spaces for customers.

8. Identify at least three sites that may be used as designated employee parking lots, and develop lease agreements.

9. Educate employers about the large number of employees who drive to work alone and who occupy parking spaces needed for customers, and the need to promote alternative means of travel to work.

10. Develop a Highland Village ride share program.

11. Convert two hour on-street parking zones to one hour zones.

12. Determine if additional 15 minute on-street parking zones are necessary.

13. Develop on-street parking enforcement program.

HBA

HBA, NSP

HBA, SWAD, PED

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

HBA, property owners

HBA

HBA, property owners

HBA, property owners

HBA

HBA, MTC

HBA, PWD

HBA, PWD

Police Department, HBA